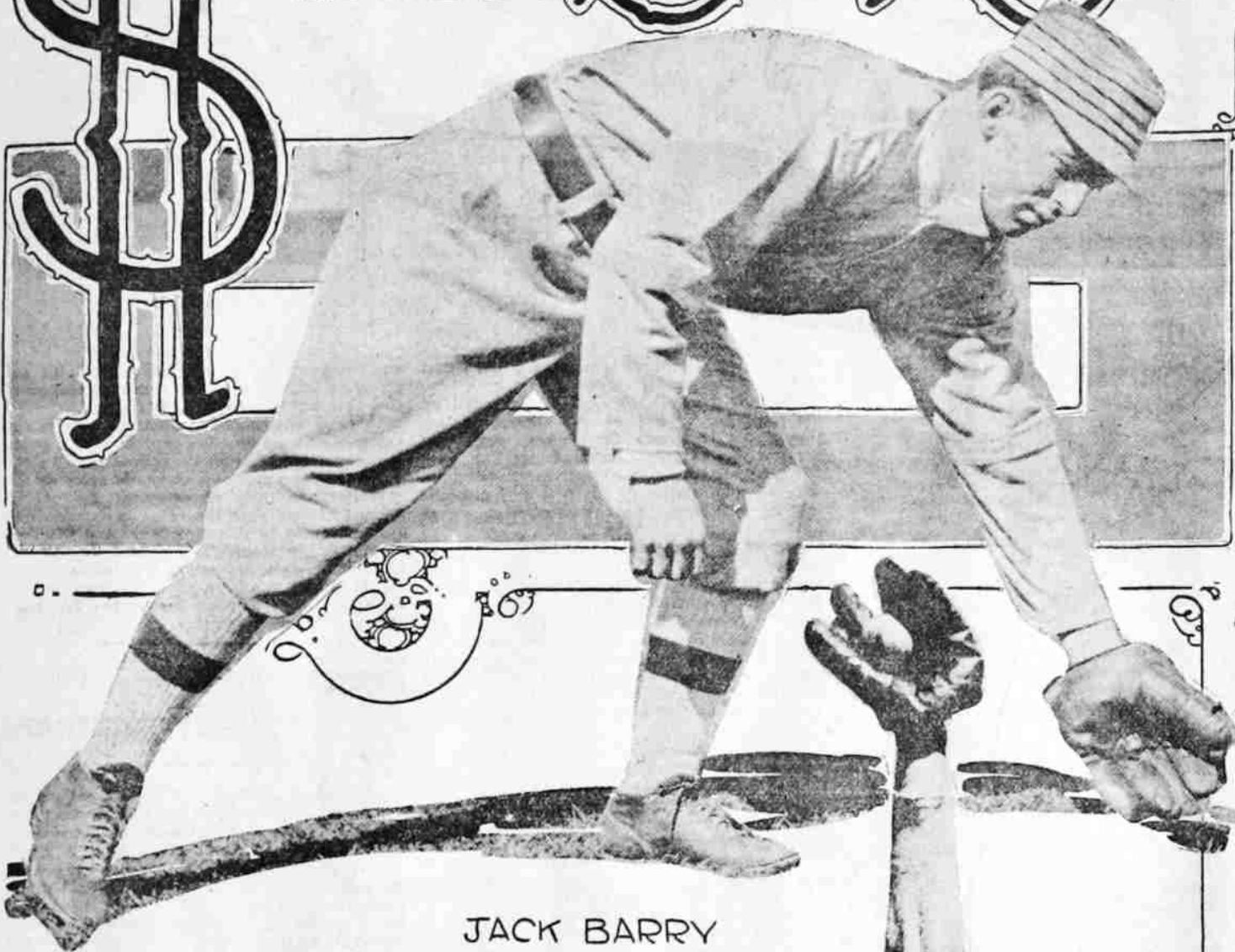


Magazine Feature Section

Money in Baseball Error



JACK BARRY

Philadelphia Doubles Its Attendance Since Raw College Boys Have Taken the Place of Famous \$100,000 Infield.

AY, Mr. Baseball Fan, or Mr. Business Man, if somebody came up to you and offered you a long-eared Missouri mule with crooked legs and an awkward, shambling, rickety trot for its only gait, in exchange for your six-cylinder \$7000 touring car or for your \$100,000 three-gaited light harness champion, what would you do? Would you merely give him a pitying smile and pass on your way?

But what if you were on the other end? What if the owner of the big touring car or blooded pacer or trotter offered to swap for your shambling jackass? Would you laugh?

Now suppose you made the swap, suppose you gave your Missouri mule for that pacing champion and the man who took the mule made a fortune out of the deal. Just imagine how you would feel then, and you are in the proper mood to continue with this story.

This is a story about baseball, a story in which perfection of the diamond, the goal of the manager and the heart's desire of the baseball public, has failed financially, whereas the schoolboy nine, the erratic tyro, has brought financial success to the magnate.

Sounds impossible, indeed, but 'tis true. "Stuffy" McInnis, Eddie Collins, Jack Barry and Frank Baker are names to conjure with. Names to inspire the baseless youth to falsetto cheering and the bodacrier and banker to lusty applause.

And yet this wonderful combination of diamond heroes, this wonderful combination of baseball prowess which gained throughout the land the reputation of being the "\$100,000 infield," became a load on the market.

This wonderful combination, the work of years of labor and toil and endless search by the greatest baseball scout and star developer in the baseball firmament, outgrew its usefulness. While the combination could go out any old day and win a ball game, it began to do it with too much regularity. To make a short story shorter, the state of affairs became such that Philadelphia began to long to see errors. The baseball public became bored with baseball perfection.

So Connie Mack, the architect, who planned and built this "\$100,000 infield," began to look around. One by one he peddled his stars for songs.

Perhaps you will say that the fabulous sums paid Connie for Eddie Collins, Frank Baker and Jack Barry were far from songs. You may say it, but you are wrong.

Ask any manager and he will tell you that you can't pay too much for a good ballplayer.

Brooklyn right now is ready to pay \$50,000 for Rogers Hornsby, sensational infielder of the St. Louis Cardinals. Infielders of the first water are so rare that \$20,000, more than the average man can save in a lifetime, is a mere song.

A mere song, because enough of those diamond stars molded into a good baseball machine will win games, attract huge crowds at fans to ball parks and make magnates and managers rich. One \$20,000 ballplayer will attract more than \$20,000 at the gate in two weeks' time if the team of which he is a member wins seven or eight games in a row.

When Tris Speaker was sold to Cleveland it was said by the wisecracks that Boston was making a mistake and that Cleveland was merely throwing itself into voluntary bankruptcy. Not so. The price paid for Speaker, fabulous as it may have sounded to the average ear, was a mere pittance compared with the huge army of silver and greenback dollars



"HOME RUN" BAKER

which marched up to the baseball park in Cleveland and arranged themselves in the coffers of the Cleveland American League Baseball Company. The novelty of seeing Tris Speaker in a Cleveland uniform attracted thousands of persons to the ball park, where tens were going before Speaker was purchased.

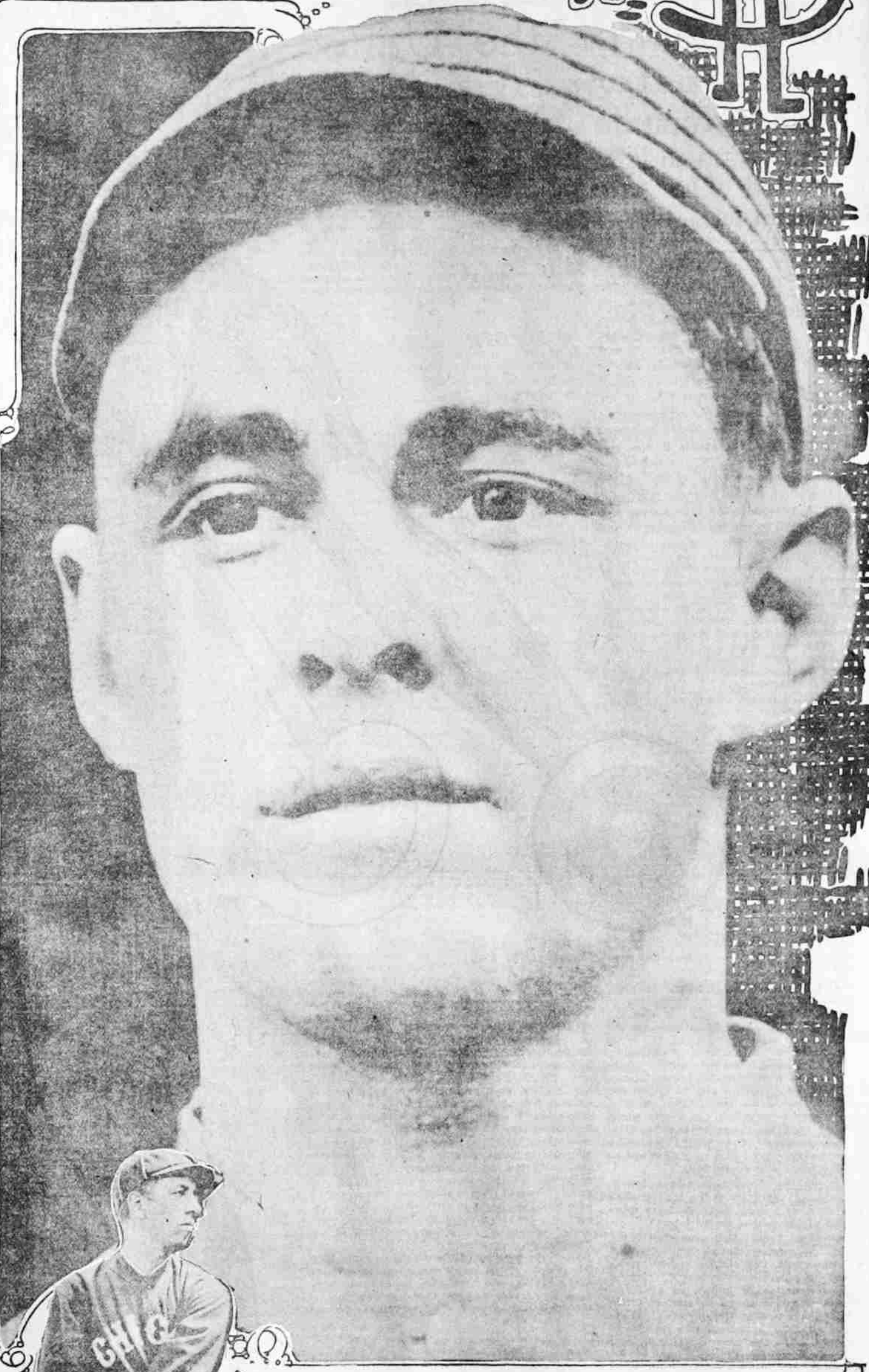
Cleveland was fortunate enough to win many games after procuring the services of Speaker, and so his purchase price was taken in at the box office many times over in a few days. And Boston was not the loser. Fans went out to see the Red Sox play because they wanted to see how the team looked without Speaker. They wanted to see Tillie Walker, the outfielder obtained from St. Louis. They wanted to see how Tillie filled Tris' shoes.

And when Jack Barry was sold by the Philadelphia Athletics to the Boston Red Sox the fans did not cease patronizing Connie Mack's ball yard. Far from it. They came out in double numbers to see how Connie would fill the hole at shortstop created by the departure

of Jack Barry, hero of many a world's series and cratville idol of the Philadelphia fans. Yes, he was a hero of the Philadelphia fans, all right. He was such a hero that every youngster in town had Jack's picture framed in his home.

But that's about all the farther it got. Everybody knew how Jack Barry could stop and throw and bat. They did not have to go out to the ball park to see it. And money makes the game, despite all talk of sport and all that.

And so Barry departed. He played with Boston, did fairly well, but was not quite the indispensable hero that Philadelphia had come to consider him.



"STUFFY" MCINNIS.

League which are conceded the best chances of winning the pennant in the circuit.

Infielders developed by Connie Mack are helping teams run one, two, three in a league in which their tutor, the man who developed them, is hopelessly last—the joke of the league.

They are so good that when they slump—at least two of them—their teams slump also. When the Yankees fall into a rut and lose a few games, "Frank Baker is in a slump" is on the lips of fandom from coast to coast.

When the White Sox made an inauspicious start in the 1916 race for the American League flag, everybody immediately began to chant that Eddie Collins, king of second basemen, was not hitting; that as soon as Eddie began to punish the horseshoe in Collinsque fashion the White Sox would take a brace and forge to the top of the league.

And 'tis true that when Collins did begin to hit near his regular stride the Chicago team did brace and begin to climb.

Jack Barry, in joining the Boston Red Sox, was noticed as an additional asset less than either Collins or Baker. Not that Barry was a disappointment; he merely joined a club which boasted greater resources, greater reserves, strength than either the White Sox or Yankees. Infielders galore are at the command of Carrigan, and so when Barry was not going just right there were plenty of men to take his place and do their duty nobly.

You immediately come to the conclusion that surely the Philadelphia fans have risen in their might and "swatted" the management for parting company with this galaxy of stars. Not so.

Of course, there was a great hue and cry at first that Connie Mack was committing baseball suicide, that he was leading in his den the most ferocious of lions, for hell hath no fury like the wrath of a baseball fan betrayed. Connie Mack was right. The fans would pay their dollars and the half dollars and their quarters to see tyros perform, whereas they had tired of seeing champions play errorless baseball, winning—almost—perfect—baseball.

Mack is trying to build up another wonderful baseball machine. He is going out among the colleges. No lack alley for which boasts home plate and three bases is too small or too far away if Connie hears of a baseball phenom. He

knows that the best diamonds are hidden the deepest, that the most valuable gems are those which are rare and hardest to find.

He is sending youngster after youngster to Shibe Park, the Philadelphia American League baseball plant. Youngster after youngster makes his debut there, and day by day the fans turn out to see, perchance to laugh at the question of Connie's latest find. But the fans attend.

Nabors, Sheehan and Myers are three of the young twirlers Connie has brought from the lush leagues to entertain the fans. Occasionally they have pitched good games. Then the Philadelphia fans have made merry over victory and over the prospect of a winning team when more winning pitchers are developed. When the pitchers fall absolutely, Connie has some others "up his sleeve" and the fans come out to see the new ones.

"Stuffy" McInnis at first base is the lone remnant of that famous \$100,000 infield. Be it from loyalty, or be it from something else, Mack and McInnis have not parted company. Perhaps McInnis preferred taking a cut in salary to leaving Mack or perhaps Mack preferred paying "Stuffy" a huge salary to losing him. Whatever it is, McInnis is in there every day working with the youngsters, teaching them, steadying them.

McInnis, third baseman, looks like the veriest dub when compared to Frank Baker. Yet he is in there working hard and there are many who predict he will be a Baker some day.

At short, Pick shows flashes of developing into a player as great as or greater than Jack Barry.

At second base the general impression is that Mack has found a man to take Collins' place and take it well. Lawry has made that impression.

But whether Lawry makes good, whether Pick makes good, whether McInnis makes good, you can't get away from the fact that Connie Mack traded his big touring car or champion pacer for a shamble-gaited jackass and had the best of the bargain.

Now, Mr. Business Man, Mr. Baseball Fan, do you think that trade would sound so idiotic to your business or baseball ears?

EDDIE COLLINS.

Eddie Collins was sold to the Chicago Americans. By this time it was noted about that Connie was going to clean house, and clean house good. Frank Baker—"Home Run" Baker they called him—became peeved at something and joined a little independent team near his home in the New England "sticks."

It was understood that Baker had asked for more money and had been told there was no chance for an increase.

At any rate, Baker departed and did not rejoin the team. Today he is playing third base for the Yankees.

Three members of the "\$100,000 infield" are members of three teams in the American